Will Oscar's Famous Hat Fit Arthur? Not Without Padding, Answers the Son

And Anyhow, if He Saw It Coming He Would Do His Level Best to Dodge It.

Tells of Tricks of the Trade in Grand Opera and Others Played by Mischievous Trentini.

By Charles Darnton.

WILL father's hat fit Arthur? This, in other words than those used here, is the question asked by Broadway wiseacres now that the son of Oscar has, with "The Geisha," taken still another step into the light opera field. Observers generally agree that a Hammerstein who can see nine stars without bumping his head against the sky has great possibilities. But I have it from this rising young manager himself that his ambition does not soar to the height of the ancestral hat.

"If I saw my father's hat falling on me I'd dodge it—get from under," he declared, putting his hand to his head. "They can throw it in the ring for all of me. In the first place, it wouldn't fit me, and I don't think I could ever make my head fit it. I should be proud, of course, to wear father's hat, but I'd prefer some softer padding inside. I shouldn't care to have it shading my brow as it has my father's. And for that matter, instead of wearing a grand opera hat, I'd like one with a new band that plays a lighter and more popular strain. That's no joke. I'm now preparing to have 'Old Heidelberg' and 'Panchon the Cricket' set to music. This much is certain, I shall never go into grand opera with my own money. I'd have to go insane first. As for my father, he is the greatest gambler that has ever played the grand opera game. He has always been one. I can remember when he walked out of the Olympia without a nickel in his pocket and went whistling down Broadway after having lost three millions. And a week later he had possession of the property where the Victoria now stands, without having paid a single cent of cash down. But I wouldn't attempt to duplicate his life for any sum of money. He has been through more than any ten great men you can name."

If this statement sounded a bit extravagant it was not my business to challenge it. It's easy to believe anything you hear about Oscar Hammerstein. And without any evident fear of contradiction his son asserted:

"Father is a great man. To be an impresario like him a man must be an habitual optimist as well as a fighter who will never admit he is licked. In the days of the Manhattan Opera Company we got out of the way when father came around with a soft hat on, for that always meant trouble. We knew his temper was anything but soft. But when he arrived in his tall hat we felt sure all was well, at least for the time being. It may have been that the high hat left more room for brain storms. There was always plenty of temperament around the opera house, but I must say that in our family it begins at home. So far as my father is concerned it seems to be hitched to his hat. I have a high hat almost like his, but I haven't worn it since the opera house closed. I stick to a derby."

"And that means you've nothing to worry you now?"

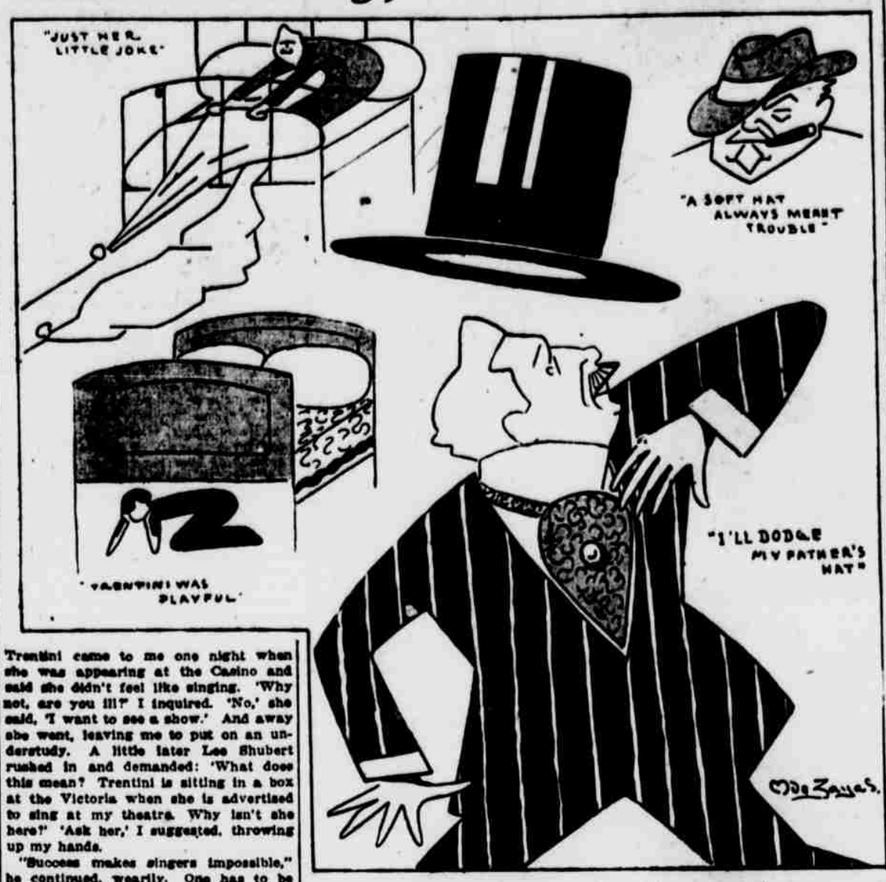
"Haven't I, though!" he exclaimed, laughing bitterly. "The most dangerous thing a manager can do is to star a singer. In grand opera he has a whip in the form of his repertory. If a singer gets fresh he can change the bill. But in light opera he is completely at the mercy of a star. For example, Trentini came to me one night when she was appearing at the Casino and said she didn't feel like singing. 'Why not, are you ill?' I inquired. 'No,' she said, 'I want to see a show.' And away she went, leaving me to put on an understudy. A little later Lee Shubert rushed in and demanded: 'What does this mean? Trentini is sitting in a box at the Victoria when she is advertised to sing at my theatre. Why isn't she here?' 'Ask her,' I suggested, throwing up my hands.

"Success makes singers impossible," he continued, wearily. One has to be diplomatic. There were times at the opera house when I had to be a great deal more than that. On one occasion 'Boheme' was the bill, with a famous tenor and a renowned prima donna. A box was filled with friends of the tenor, and whenever the prima donna was singing they would turn their backs to the stage. But when the tenor sang they would make a tremendous demonstration. The prima donna stood this for two acts, and then her 'temper-ament' got the better of her. As the tenor came off the stage she grabbed him and pushed him against the wall, and it took all my efforts, together with those of two stage hands, to separate them. During my grand opera days I learned one curious freak of temperament—singers of the same voice would not speak to one another.

"One tenor went still further. He would not let the curtain go up if he saw another tenor in the audience. One night he actually compelled me to put a rival singer out of a box. Tetrazzini had the strangest idea of all. Before her entrance she would stand in the wings and drop a little dagger that she always carried. If it stuck upright in the floor she would accept this as an omen that she would give a good performance. A funny thing happened at a Saturday matinee—that is, it seems funny now. A French tenor who was to sing Samson in 'Samson and Delilah' sent a letter at 12 o'clock saying he would not appear unless my father signed a contract with him for the following year. He knew that all the other tenors of the company were out of town. The order I got was: 'Find another tenor somehow, somewhere, and be quick about it!' After a long, frantic search I discovered a tenor who knew the role in a cafe. He wasn't in his best form, but we hustled him to the opera house, dressed him and fairly pushed him on the stage. This Samson was so uncertain in his movements that instead of pulling the pillars down he fell against them and sent all the scenery tumbling before the right time."

"Life must seem rather dull to you now?" I concluded.

"Oh, no, it is fairly lively," he rejoined, brightly. "Satisfying the demands of a nine-star cast, especially in the matter of dressing rooms, is even harder work than running a boarding house. But Trentini beats them all. She can make more trouble—without really meaning to do so—than a dozen women twice her size. She is little—but oh, my! Her sense of humor is both strong and strange. Once when she was playing in Boston her room at the hotel was next to mine. I went to bed, but not to sleep. Slowly but surely the sheet was pulled off the bed. Jumping up, I looked after the bed, but found no one there. I jerked back the sheet only to feel it being pulled off again. A wild idea of a haunted room seized me. I tried to turn on the lights, but they wouldn't work. Then I struck matches, and finally solved the mystery. Strings tied to the sheet ran under the door into the next room. Trentini's next joke was to have her maid sew the sheets of my bed together for about two feet at the bottom, so that I had to sleep doubled up. On another occasion, at 7.30 in the evening, Trentini was missing. At the last moment she appeared in her dressing room, and with great glee informed me that while I had been hunting for her in the hotel she was hiding under her bed. Only last week, when I went to Boston to see how 'The Firefly' was getting on another playful attention was paid me. As soon as I got into bed I felt something burning me. Suspecting that Trentini was up to her old tricks, or a new one, I proceeded to investigate and found an electric iron under the sheets. To make things still more pleasant for me, she had sprinkled the bed with a mixture of powder and flour. This brings me to the last qualification of an impresario—he must be able to live without sleep."



Doesn't the Balkan Blouse Justify What Gen. Sherman Said About War?

Take the wildest dream of a cubist and transfer it to a silk waist pattern—you have the Balkan blouse. Take a meal bag or a potato sack, turn it upside down and tie a ribbon around the opening—you have the chic lines of the Balkan blouse-coat. Both achievements are the very latest. Women love 'em—what's more, wear 'em. Balkan hostilities in the Far East are responsible for Balkan fashions in the Far West. Which fact goes far toward convincing the impartial observer that Sherman told the truth about war.

Balkan color schemes are distinctly futuristic. Studying them one grasps the true explanation of the mysterious "Nude Descending a Staircase." She really wasn't nude at all; she was wearing a frock of Bulgarian hues. As for the designs stamped on the strangely dyed silks, they are geometry on a jag.

The Balkan blouse coat is a sort of elongated Russian blouse, the thing that is so becoming to small boys and lean, eleven-year-old girls. Sometimes it ends at the hips, sometimes at the knees, sometimes at a point midway between. It is guiltless of fit and no moralist can ever censure it for an undue display of the figure. In fact, you can get along perfectly well without a waist line if you wear a Bulgarian blouse.

Another weird feature is the sash, from six to eighteen inches in width, with which the blouse coat ends off. The color of the sash usually contrasts sharply with the tone of the coat, and it has long fringed ends which cross over at the left side.

The whole design is immensely becoming—to the lady who neither has a figure nor any aspirations for one.

Sketches From Life of Exaggerated Forms of Balkan Blouses.

The Baseball Girl Fan of 1913 Keeps Score and Knows 'Bone' Plays

THE Baseball Girl of 1913 is a picture. But don't imagine for a minute that her sole duty in the Polo Grounds is one of decoration. Standing on a chair and frantically waving an automobile veil, she can tell the Highlanders or the Giants when to start a double-steal. And, moreover, she does.

Her leap to the chair is not to attract attention. And this picture of excited femininity is lost to the crowd, because she is a fan—a wise fan, at that—and knows when to leap. At her moments of excitement it is no time to look at a pretty girl. All eyes are centred on the play. Instead of being a target for wadded paper and other harmless missiles, as in the old days, the Baseball Girl of 1913 resumes her seat with a buzz around her of:

"She knows the game. She's one of us."

With a score card always in her hand she takes time between spells of excitement to see that it is accurately kept.

"Was that a hit or an error?" she asks of anyone that happens to be near. And from her frank expression they know she is not merely trying to start a conversation.

"I guess it would be an error," is the reply.

"I'm going to score it a hit," she finally says, after biting the end of her pencil for a moment. "That ball was too hard hit to handle. Give the fielder the benefit of the doubt."

The beauty of the Baseball Girl of 1913, and that which makes her honestly admired, is that she goes to the Polo Grounds to enjoy baseball. She is no lemonade-sipping, gum-chewing bit of daintiness, who wants to know why Hal Chase wears red jersey sleeves under a blue-striped shirt and parts his hair on the side. Not she. She knows his batting average from the day he first set out from the Coast.

Our new baseball girl, in her enthusiasm over the game itself, has hit conventionality squarely in the head—"Beaned" it, she would say.

She goes to the game without an escort and does not need one. She can't be bothered with a man to whom she has to explain the game. She has her box seat by the season and can be found there every day. She does not write perfumed notes to the players. Rather would she see them traded if they can't hit the ball.

In other words, the Baseball Girl of 1913 is an honest-to-goodness thirty-third-degree rooter, with baseball records as a part of her daily diet.

In the Giants' Club House Before and After the Game

A Comedy in Two Acts and Some Scenes.

By Bozeman Bulger.

SCENARIO.

At the period in which this story begins a member of the Giants' Baseball Club had pulled a "bone," meaning a play that results from a boney growth in the head instead of brain. The effect of this bone is not developed until the second act. For this reason two distinct scenes are necessary. The first shows the clubhouse at 10 o'clock in the morning, when all is gay and the air is full of song and gladsome shouts. Two boys are seen hanging up uniforms to dry and arranging table and chairs for such pastimes as checkers, bridge, vingt-et-un and minors.

The second scene shows the same clubhouse at 6 o'clock P. M., with songs hushed, boys in the far background and no table and no jokes. The rubble can be heard without.

ACT I.

Boy enters, attired in discarded mackinaw of a Giant player, with cigarette dangling limply from his lips and bearing armful of newspapers. He dumps them on bench near which are square wooden cuspidors filled with sawdust for convenience of tobacco chewing readers. Three players reach for the papers and one of them turns to sporting page. Other two look for stock market table.

WILTSE—Say, boy, can't you get a paper with the opening quotations?

MATHEWSON *(interrupting)*—What do you expect? There's nothing in these papers but rewritten stories and sporting stuff. I don't get a stock table until Wall street editions.

BOY—The feller said them was the latest papers, and two of them had box scores. Ain't there no sporting stuff there?

MATHEWSON — Never mind about the sporting stuff. *(Turns to Wiltse)* Say, George, I wouldn't be in any hurry to buy that Pennsylvania preferred, anyway. It's liable to be off a couple of points before closing.

RECRUIT *(reading sporting page)*—Say, Matty, who is this fellow "Messrs." that's umpiring up here? He was also umpiring out in the Tri-State when I played there. Do you use three umpires here?

MATHEWSON — What's that? "Messrs."? *(Picks up paper and sees where names of umpires are printed as "Messrs. Klem and Orth." Shows it to Wiltse and others, and there is a loud laugh at expense of recruit.)*

Enter several players who have just finished their hour of practice. They yank off their uniforms and with loud shouts run for the shower bath. A loud splashing is heard in the swimming tank. Several athletes are strenuously engaged in trying to duck Big Jeff Tesreau. They all get ducked themselves. They emerge from tank, rushing all over clubhouse, their skin glistening from cold water.

It is now about 12 o'clock and Wilson, Ames, Mathewson and Merkle draw up chairs to table and start a game of auction bridge. They are all expert players. They are frequently disturbed by thrown towels, wadded up paper and water thrown from a dipper.

BOY *(carrying large jar for soup and tin pails for coffee)*—What do you want for lunch? *(Players crowd round, giving orders and then changing them, to confusion of boy. He finally speaks with decision and finality.)* I guess I'll bring ten ham and egg sandwiches, soup for six and two buckets of coffee.

Enter small, stockily built man with a bustling walk. With one glance he takes in everything and then goes into a private office. In a few minutes he comes out attired in uniform. As soon as he enters all noises suddenly cease. Players reach for their gloves and give impression of having just got ready to go on field.

McGRAW—Was everybody out this morning? *(Means out on practice field.)*

CHORUS—All except one of the boys, who is laid up with a cold.

McGRAW—Better get out there, I guess; we'll need some batting practice.

Entire company exits toward ball field.

ACT II.

It is 5.30 o'clock, and Ed. Mackall, the colored trainer of Giants, is in clubhouse alone except for a pitcher, who has been knocked from box and is on rubbing table. As trainer massages muscles the pitcher occasionally growls incoherently.

PITCHER *(on rubbing table)*—You see me here, don't you? I started and was going good.

MACKALL—Oh, I see; somebody batted for you.

PITCHER—One of the Brooklyn fellows got hold of a lucky one for a home run and when the side was out somebody batted for me.

Enter another athlete—a pinch hitter. Attitude gloomy.

TRAINER *(to newcomer)* — What's doing?

PITCHER *(from rubbing table)*—Did we get anything in eighth?

PINCH HITTER—I binged one and got on, but they put some one in to run for me. Pulled a bone and was caught.

Rabble of mob is heard without and athletes know game is over.

Enter three or four young ball players, dripping with perspiration and running hurriedly to bath so as to avoid conversation in front room. Whole team follows immediately. There are heard some unprintable exclamations of disgust.

Enter one lone athlete smiling. Nothing ever disturbs him. His name is Hartley.

HARTLEY — Say, fellows, did you hear that one that the busher pulled about "Messrs."?

CRANDALL—Cheese on the joke stuff.

Chorus of stage whispers: "Here comes Mack!" *(Everybody is suddenly interested in lockers.)*

McGRAW—Do you fellows remember what that speaker down in Knoxville said about that town producing more hardwood and marble than any city in the country? *(There is no answer, as if expecting manager to continue. He does.)* Well, we've got Knoxville tied!

Three players are called into private office. They emerge somewhat crestfallen. One player in bath temporarily forgets himself and starts first bar of "Jungle Land."

CHORUS *(low and sullen-like)* — Cheese on the harmony. Can that barbershop stuff!

Ball players are now escaping from every exit silently and with catlike tread.

Presently the manager is alone except for one caller.

McGRAW—And still they brag on the hardwood and marble products of Knoxville!

Dons raincoat and accompanied by friend exits.

Lights out.

CURTAIN.

The "Nickel Beat."

Our old friend, High-Cost-of-Living, has made five cents seem a very small sum of money, but your correspondent regretfully has to report the case of a youthful fellow citizen, who, being possessed of an unusual capacity for quick thinking, succeeded in a most improper attempt to save a nickel.

The writer was coming downtown on a Sixth avenue elevated train one afternoon during the off hours and was buying a ticket at one of the Columbus avenue stations. A Ninth avenue train was standing at the platform, the guard with his hands on the handles and just about to close the gates. This wasn't the train the writer wanted, however, so he walked leisurely toward the ticket chopper. Suddenly a well grown boy, an entire stranger, rushed up from behind, slapped him on the shoulder, shouted: "Goodby, old top! See you to-morrow!" and dashed aboard the car.

There were very few people about the station, so our misguided young friend had taken a chance—and got away with it—that the station man would think him a companion of the one who had just come from the ticket window, and that the latter was to pay his fare.